



Another Miserable Love Song

Brooke Carter

Reading level: 2.6

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Book Summary

Kallie Echo is starting to think dreams are dangerous. Her dad had one—to be a rock star—and then he died. Now Kallie is practically homeless and her life is falling apart. So when a punk band asks Kallie to sing for them, she must decide if she's got the heart to front a band of rocker chicks (and one trans guy). Can she find a new purpose in punk? And will the drummer with the amazing smile break her heart?

The band goes on tour, and everything hinges on Kallie. It's a lot of pressure—especially when you throw in substance abuse and Kallie's deadbeat mom showing up at the worst time. Kallie must learn to trust her friends, and herself, if she's going to get over the past and make a new future. But if she dares to dream again, will she lose it all?

Prereading Idea

The movie *The Outsiders* is frequently referenced in the book, so it would be helpful for students to get an idea of the characters and story line. Show students the official movie trailer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tgJqnVMAtc and www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJmi3-Eau00. Then read students a synopsis of the movie: www.imdb.com/title/tt0086066/plotsummary.

Connecting to the World—Writing and Research Ideas

- Kallie will soon be homeless because her father has died and her mother left. Fortunately for Kallie, she had friends, so she escaped the plight of being a homeless teen. Ask students to investigate the homeless teen population to determine what causes teens to be on their own and to learn how they stay alive on the streets. Have students create a brochure that includes statistics about homeless teens, facts the students have learned about the homeless teen lifestyle, and a list of possible community resources to assist homeless teens. Distribute and post brochures in school counseling centers, libraries or other appropriate school locations.
- Kallie is all-too-familiar with people leaving; her mother left for drugs, and her father died. Then she loses Jaime, the love of her life. Ask students to research the stages of grief and loss: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Kallie displays different stages of grief for each person she has lost. Ask students to create a poster of the four stages of grief and to add quotes/evidence from the book that reveal that Kallie has experienced or is experiencing that stage of grief. Have students share their posters in small groups.
- Ask students to write a song or poem about Kallie's experiences with the band, expressing her emotions and experiences as Misery Girl. Ask students to practice and present their poems to the class.

Connecting to the Text—Elements of the Novel***Plot***

The plot of this story would be effective as a movie screenplay. As a class, determine which famous actor would play each part. Then, divide the class into eleven groups, and assign each group a chapter to rewrite as a movie script. When completed, combine the chapters in order to make one script, and have students practice and perform the screenplay.

Theme

The theme of a book is often based on what the main character learns. Ask students to work in small groups to write a thematic statement based on the lessons Kallie learns. Then have students create a thematic collage poster that visually represents the theme statement. In addition to the theme statement, students may include excerpts from the text, pictures, symbols, sketches, slogans, colors, allusions to other texts, etc. to create their thematic message. Display collages in the classroom.

Point of View

Another Miserable Love Song is written from Kallie's point-of-view. Ask students to select a scene and to rewrite the scene from another character's point-of-view. When the rewrites are complete, divide students into small groups to share their writing. After sharing within their group ask students to reflect individually on whether the original or their rewrite is more powerful and to explain why they believe that to be true.

Connecting to the Students—Discussion Questions

1. How do the girls in the band convince Kallie to join the band? Why is Kallie so nervous about singing?
2. Why is Jaime nervous to tell Kallie she is transitioning? How does Kallie's reaction make Jaime feel?
3. How do the “echoes” Kallie finds from her father help her adjust to and accept his death?
4. In chapter 7, Kallie says she cried from the bottom of her feet. How can a cry so big both hurt and feel good at the same time?
5. In chapter 8, Why does Kallie give her mother the ring her father left for her? What does Kallie's mother give up to get the ring?
6. Why does Kallie quit drinking after she sees her mother? What is the major benefit for the band for Kallie to quit drinking?
7. What does Jaime say to help Kallie accept his death, the death of her father, and the loss of her mother?

Writer's Craft

Ask students to look at the list of words below and to find them in the book. Ask students to write definitions of all the words based on the context clues in the novel. Then assign each student one of the words on the list. On an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper, have students write an original sentence for their assigned word and add a drawing or sketch. Display the sentences and drawings on a word wall in the classroom. Optionally, students should look for ten additional words to add to this list.

Stupor	chapter 1
Infectious	chapter 1
Lasciviously	chapter 2
Perpetually	chapter 2
Pseudo	chapter 2
Enveloped	chapter 2
Soiree	chapter 2
Resonance	chapter 2

Author Biography

Brooke Carter is the author of the Orca titles *Another Miserable Love Song*, *Learning Seventeen* and *Lucky Break*. She was born and raised in beautiful British Columbia, where she earned an MFA in Creative Writing (UBC) and where she currently makes her home with her family. For more information, visit www.brookecarter.com.